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Flash Back

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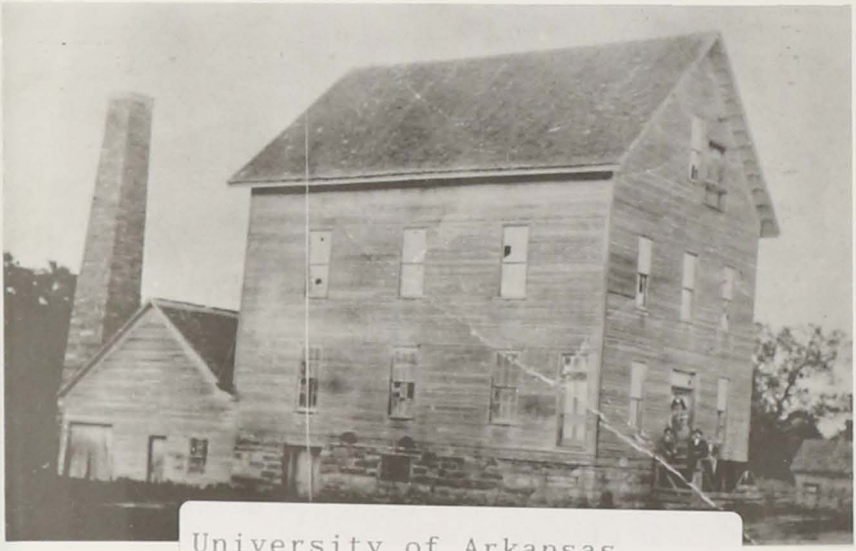

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118 East Dickson Street, Fayetteville, AR 72701

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FLASHBACK

Washington County Historical Society
Preserving the Past for the Future
Volume 53 **Winter 2003** **Number 1**

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Cover: Rhea's Mill stood a few miles northwest of present-day Prairie Grove. Print is from a negative made by Bob Huff in the 1940s (Courtesy David Huff).

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THE PRAIRIE GROVE VALLEY AND ITS COMMUNITIES
PART ONE

WILLARD B. GATEWOOD

Washington County, Arkansas, came into being following a protracted and complicated dispute over the boundary between the Arkansas Territory and the Indian lands to the west. The dispute involved an area known as Lovely's Purchase. Pressured by land-hungry settlers, the territorial legislature created Lovely County, which embraced much of the controversial Purchase. The dispute was finally resolved in 1828: the boundary line was pushed about forty miles eastward; Lovely County ceased to exist and Washington County was created out of what had been Lovely County with the county seat located at Washington Court House, a name later changed to Fayetteville.

The county lies in two physiographic zones: the northern one-third is in the Springfield Plain and the southern third is in the Boston Mountains. In some places the outliers from these mountains intersect with the plain. The county is drained by two river systems. In the northwestern section the Illinois River leaves the county after wending its way northward from the Boston Mountains through the Springfield Plain. The eastern portion of the county is drained by the White River.

According to most authorities, the earliest white settlers in western Washington County found large areas of prairies and valleys covered with a luxuriant growth of grasses that afforded

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Willard B. Gatewood is a retired professor of history at the University of Arkansas, Fayetteville. Part two of this article will appear in the Spring issue of *Flashback*.

excellent pasturage for buffaloes and other herbivorous animals. By the time the first white settlers arrived, the buffaloes had moved out of the area, but ample evidence of their earlier presence in the so-called Prairie Grove Valley still existed. The early settlers in the valley were quick to recognize that the same grassy prairies that nourished buffaloes would do the same for livestock and cattle. As a result, livestock and cattle, along with wheat, corn, and fruit growing, became important elements in the local economy. One writer has noted that the "dense growth of timber" observed in western Washington County in the late nineteenth century had been brought about by the successful suppression of fire by farmers in the more than fifty years since the settlement of the area. An abundance of wildlife existed throughout the area, including bears and panthers, and numerous packs of wolves that posed a serious menace, especially to small livestock.

Once the boundary was firmly established between the Arkansas Territory and the Indian country and Arkansas became a state in 1836, increasing numbers of migrants, especially from southeastern states, settled in Arkansas's northwestern corner, establishing small communities along the numerous streams. Even so, Washington County and indeed the entire state remained under-populated for many years. Historian S. Charles Bolton has appropriately described Arkansas between 1800 and 1860 as "remote and restless."

Nowhere was this description more apt than when applied to western Washington County, a place vastly different from the society that was developing in the low country in the eastern part of Arkansas where large cotton plantations came to dominate the economy and society of that portion of the state in contrast to the small farms that prevailed in the northwest. The frontier communities in western Washington County tended to be isolated from the national market economy that was emerging elsewhere

in the nation in the first half of the nineteenth century. To a large extent theirs was a self-sufficient economy that relied on barter since money (specie) was extraordinarily scarce. Their world was one of scarcity and small scale. Their economy was locally oriented, and their social life focused on family and church. Their contact with the booming, modernizing society in a few commercial and industrial centers in the East was rare. The dwellings of the early settlers tended to be small and simple, and only in the decade before the Civil War did more commodious residences make their appearance. Their limited wardrobes were homemade and usually out of homespun fabric. Hard physical labor over long hours was the lot of both sexes on the western Arkansas frontier.

Travel everywhere in Arkansas was difficult and even dangerous in the early nineteenth century, but in few if any other areas was it more difficult and uncertain than in Washington County, where roads were often impassable. Travel on navigable streams that were subject to extreme fluctuations in flow was no more reliable, and furthermore, relatively few such streams existed in western Washington County. Most roads were merely paths cleared of timber but still covered with stumps and rocks. The main road through Washington County by the outbreak of the Civil War was known as Old Wire Road or Military Road. It ran from Van Buren through Fayetteville and Elkhorn Tavern to Cassville, Missouri. This road was originally constructed around 1836 by Army engineers, and later, upon the completion of the telegraph line through Fayetteville on July 4, 1861, the road acquired the name, "Wire Road." Butterfield Stage Lines operating out of Fayetteville used this road until the company ceased operations with the outbreak of the Civil War. During the war Wire Road became known as the "Military Road" by local residents because of its extensive use by contending armies. The principal east-west road in the antebellum era that passed through

western Washington County was the Fayetteville-Cane Hill Road that joined the Line Road, the north-south road in extreme western Washington County just east of the boundary between Arkansas and the Indian Territory. Small wonder then that mail destined to the remote communities in that portion of the county arrived on a highly irregular schedule.

Settlers in the trans-Mississippi frontier, including Arkansas, came from places where land, water, and trees constituted the underpinnings of the civilization to which they were accustomed. Unlike those who settled in the area of the Great Plains where only land was abundant, those hardy souls who put down roots in western Washington County found that despite their isolation and the lack of easy access to outside markets, the area had an abundance of all three ingredients—land, water, and trees—necessary for building a civilization in the western "wilderness" perched on the edge of Indian country. Along the numerous rivers, creeks, and smaller streams in the area, they set about constructing water-powered gristmills to produce flour from the grain grown in the fertile valleys and prairies that had been cleared of lush vines and cane. Forests provided ample lumber to build homes, schools, churches, stores, and other structures that figured so significantly in their efforts toward community building and "settling the country up."

Those engaged in community building in western Washington County both before and after Arkansas became a state in 1836 extolled the virtues of their new places of residence. Nowhere was this enthusiasm more evident than in letters to relatives and friends in their native states to the east; they encouraged those in Kentucky, Tennessee, Georgia, and elsewhere to join them in Arkansas. Many were no doubt attracted to the county as a result of such letters, and certainly evidence suggests the important role of kinship in the settlement of western Washington County. Some writers maintain that residing near

relatives often took precedence over settling on more choice land located at greater distances. The proximity of relatives had advantages for both newcomers and those already established, especially in pooling labor and talents in carrying out agricultural tasks, construction projects, and other activities of a rural people. In time members of these early families and their descendants figured prominently in the establishment of numerous communities, some of which achieved and maintained prominence in western Washington County.

The acceleration of immigration into this portion of the county brought in its wake, according to one authority, "doubtful characters that have always been found on the extreme frontiers of our civilized settlements." Murders, robberies, gambling, trafficking in whiskey, and violence were blamed on the "desperadoes" who were concentrated "along the Cherokee line." Needless to say, such activities complicated the task of those settlers bent on building communities that conformed to their conception of "civilized" society.

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Many years before Prairie Grove emerged as an important town in that part of Washington County west of Fayetteville, other settlements in the area had emerged. One was Evansville, located on the border of what is today Oklahoma, and another was the area around present-day Cane Hill. In fact the settlement of the western portion of Washington County appeared to have progressed primarily in a west-to-east direction, starting especially in the Cane Hill area and moving eastward. Cane Hill boasted of being one of the "most fertile spots in the State," and its numerous springs and ample water made it all the more attractive to potential settlers. In actual fact, Cane Hill first

emerged as the center of economic, social, and cultural life in the western section of the county.

The community there was known either as Boonsboro and as Cane Hill if one follows the checkered history of its post offices. It appears that Cane Hill was the name of the post office in 1830 but that name was discontinued in 1843 when the post office assumed the name Boonsboro. After the Civil War the official name of the post office once again became Cane Hill. Therefore it will be referred to hereafter as Cane Hill/Boonsboro.

The community grew rapidly after the settlement of the boundary dispute between Arkansas and the Indian Territory. As early as 1836, a visitor to Cane Hill/Boonsboro noted that it was "one of the most densely settled neighborhoods in the West," with four dry goods stores, one grocery, two wagon-makers, four blacksmith shops, a post office, one sawmill, three gristmills, one church and "an excellent school." The village emerged as an important trading center for a wide area of western Washington County. Later, the Bank of Cane Hill was established and lasted until 1921, when it was purchased by the Bank of Lincoln.

Among the pioneer settlers of Cane Hill/Boonsboro were various members of families by the names of Buchanan, Carnahan, Pyeatt, Alexander, McGarrah, Simpson, Shannon, and Marrs, who collectively seem to have possessed a remarkable degree of literacy and who created institutions that clearly reflected their southern origins. These families brought with them to the frontier a wide variety of skills, including blacksmithing, gristmilling, and the tanning of hides. Many of them had valuable experiences as pioneers either in other places in Arkansas or elsewhere. No less evident among these early settlers was a strong commitment to religion (especially that of the Cumberland Presbyterian variety), education, and the institution of Negro slavery. Many of the Cane Hill/Boonsboro settlers owned slaves, and in fact, the two largest slave-owners in Washington County

were Cane Hill/ Boonsboro residents, Mark and Richard Bean, each of whom owned thirty slaves at a time when the overwhelming majority of slave-owners in the South owned fewer than ten slaves.

Among the most influential early residents of Cane Hill/Boonsboro were the six Buchanan brothers, and the best known and most influential of the brothers were two Cumberland Presbyterian ministers, Andrew ("Uncle Buck") and John ("Uncle John"). They were largely responsible for the powerful presence of Cumberland Presbyterianism in much of western Washington County. As was the case throughout the county, churches were often the sponsors of the earliest schools. The Cumberland Presbyterians not only organized churches, but were also early involved in establishing schools. Almost from the beginning, Cane Hill/Boonsboro had private schools. In 1835 the Cumberland Presbyterian Church there opened the Cane Hill Collegiate Institute for young men and two years later created a similar institution for young women. Rev. Andrew Buchanan conceived the idea of transforming these institutes into a full-fledged college. With the aid of his brothers, Rev. John Carnahan, and others he realized his ambition and in 1852 Cane Hill College opened. When Buchanan died five years later, he bequeathed a sizable portion of his large estate to the college. Described as the "first chartered college in Arkansas," the institution had the "power to confer such degrees in the arts and sciences . . . as usually conferred by college and universities in the United States." Devastated in the Battle of Cane Hill during the Civil War, the college reopened after the war only to be destroyed twice by fire, confronted with declining denominational support, and overshadowed by the new state university in Fayetteville. Cane Hill College was forced to close permanently in the 1890s.

The influence of the college, businesses, and cultural and social life of Cane Hill/ Boonsboro extended far beyond the

confines of that particular community. Its residents and their descendants participated in the establishment of other villages in western Washington County. For example, Rev. Andrew Buchanan, who was a landowner and entrepreneur as well as clergyman, acquired the site on which his stepson created the town of Prairie Grove. The Carnahans, Pyeatts, and other Cane Hill/Boonsboro families were among the pioneer settlers of Viney Grove. In fact, members of the original families in the Cane Hill/Boonsboro community figured in the settlement of most villages in the Prairie Grove Valley and even beyond.

An unusual village located seven miles southwest of Cane Hill/Boonsboro known as Hermannsburg was established in the 1850s by families of German origin. The leaders of the group were the Hermann brothers and their wives, who persuaded friends and relatives to join them. Most of the residents were educated and skilled craftsmen. The Hermann brothers opened a large store, which was stocked by goods purchased on annual buying trips to St. Louis and New Orleans. Cherokees from the Indian Territory were among the store's best and most frequent customers. With the outbreak of the Civil War in 1861 the peace and happiness of Hermannsburg ended, and most of its German settlers took refuge in St. Louis. The last group departed after the Battle of Prairie Grove in 1862. What remained of the village following the havoc wreaked by bushwhackers and Indian marauders became known as Dutch Mills, a tiny settlement that had at least one large gristmill until 1925. "Dutch" was supposedly a derogatory term applied to Germans by Confederate sympathizers after German-American soldiers from St. Louis, under the command of Union general Franz Sigel, participated in the Battle of Pea Ridge (1862). Clearly, the term "dutch" does not refer to people from the Low Countries and may have merely been a mispronunciation of the German word "deutsch."

Another settlement of much longer duration than Hermannsburg was located in the northwestern corner of Washington County a few miles from the Indian Territory. Known by a variety of names during its earliest years, it assumed the name Cincinnati in 1857, presumably because of a nearby creek of that name. The community traced its origins to the late 1830s and early 1840s and was originally Cumberland Presbyterian country, although Methodists soon appeared. Farms surrounding Cincinnati contained sizable numbers of slaves; the estate of one farmer included sixteen slaves. About forty-five years after establishment of Cincinnati, the editors of Goodspeed's history of Washington County wrote eloquently about the place, describing it as "one of the best inland towns in the county" situated in the "center of a rich grain and livestock region." By 1890 the business transacted annually in the village amounted to about $225,000, generated primarily by merchants, the manufacture of wagons and farm implements, the production of flour, corn meal, and feed, and the sale of cattle, sheep, hogs, and mules. In that year Cincinnati possessed five general stores, a farm implement factory, two blacksmith shops, two tanneries, two harness shops, several gristmills, an undertaker, a hotel, and a livery stable. The village also had two churches, an academy, and a Masonic Lodge. Health care was provided by two physicians, one druggist, and one dentist. Beginning in the 1890s an active chapter of a national organization known as the Anti-Horse Thief Association existed in Cincinnati, and by the end of the decade residents had access to a local weekly newspaper, *The Cincinnati Argus*. In the opening years of the twentieth century a local telephone company was organized and remained in existence until the 1940s when the Prairie Grove Telephone Company extended service to the area.

From its beginning, Cincinnati manifested interest in education. In 1846 a combination church and school, called Union School, opened. Actively supported by the Sons of Temperance,

an organization that was strong throughout Washington County at the time, it was a subscription or tuition school. Thirty years later a joint-stock company sponsored by the Masonic Lodge built the Masonic Male and Female Academy that was in session for three or four months each year. Originally consisting of the first eight grades, it later included a high school and existed as such until 1939, when, with the aid of the New Deal's Works Progress Administration (WPA), the village built a public school.

Among the most prosperous business enterprises in Cincinnati during its heyday were its wagon factory, mills, and William H. Rhea's general merchandise store. The wagon factory was the creation of James Oates, an Englishman with a colorful career as a sailor, adventurer in Central America, and Union soldier in the Civil War. Oates moved to Cincinnati in 1868 and established a wagon factory, which produced as many as four hundred wagons a year as well as hacks, buggies, farming tools, and coffins. Oates's factory was without question the largest employer in a wide area.

The largest mercantile establishment in Cincinnati was owned by William H. Rhea who, born in Tennessee in 1825, moved to Arkansas with his parents. He learned the blacksmith's trade from his father, Pleasant V. Rhea, a prominent early settler, and practiced the blacksmith's trade as a young adult. In 1851, at the age of twenty-six, he opened his store in Cincinnati and regularly stocked it with merchandise purchased from agents in Van Buren. The merchandise was then hauled from the Van Buren steamboat landing over roads, such as they were, to Cincinnati. Rhea also purchased other goods from St. Louis companies, and they were shipped by rail to Tipton, Missouri, then by wagon to Cincinnati. The Rhea store maintained a large and varied inventory that included everything from dry goods, boots and shoes, toiletries, and farm tools to violin strings and assorted patent medicines such as Cholera Mixture, Flour of Sulfur, and

Bed Bug Bane. A substantial portions of Rhea's business was based on barter.

Among Rhea's customers were fugitives from justice who had taken refuge in the Indian Territory but who crossed into Arkansas regularly to patronize businesses in Cincinnati, apparently without fear of being apprehended. At Rhea's store they could find whatever supplies they needed and no doubt paid in cash. They could also gamble in the commodious gaming room in the Cincinnati House, the hotel owned by Rhea's brother-in-law, who also ran a hack service to Fayetteville. Rhea himself patronized the gaming room only on rare occasions and never risked more than a few dollars, at least until a winter night in 1856 when the stakes were extraordinarily high. He gambled the entire night and allegedly came away with winnings that amounted to $100,000. Convinced that he would never be so lucky again, he avoided gambling and the gaming table for the rest of his life.

His winnings allowed him to establish a store in Wedington (sometimes spelled Weddington), a village a few miles northeast of Cincinnati in the adjoining township. The village had been founded in 1831 by brothers Robert Green and William Lewis Wedington, who had first lived in Cane Hill and boarded in the home of Rev. Andrew Buchanan. Robert Wedington became a Cumberland Presbyterian minister. More significantly, perhaps, Rhea's winnings at the gaming table allowed him to realize a long-standing ambition, namely to go into the milling business and own the "the finest mill ever built west of the Mississippi."

Rhea found the site for fulfilling his ambition to become a miller (as well as a merchant) on a stream a few miles northwest of present-day Prairie Grove. He purchased land that included a mill from John P. Kellam late in the 1850s and set about refurbishing and modernizing the old mill so that in a few years his Valley Steam Mill became one of the most up-to-date and best known mills in Washington County. The name of the settlement

that grew up around his mill officially became Rhea's Mill in 1867 when a post office was established there. Actually the first white settlers had moved into what became Rhea's Mill as early as the 1820s, but not until the Rhea family arrived did the settlement experience substantial growth. Rhea not only established a first-class mill to serve the grain farmers over a large area, but he also acquired a large farm and built and operated a store comparable to the one he had previously owned in Cincinnati. One writer maintains that no merchant in Washington County was his equal except perhaps a few in the growing town of Fayetteville. One attraction of Rhea's Store was a barrel of whiskey with an attached dipper kept in an upstairs room of the store for use by favored customers. Some of those who partook of his whiskey on occasion had difficulty navigating their return down the stairs. Described as a "public spirited man ... ever ready to support worthy enterprises," Rhea was a shrewd businessman, a dedicated Democrat, and a Mason. After Rhea's death in 1884, his wife and several sons (one of whom married Sarah McIlroy, the daughter of J. H. McIlroy of Fayetteville) continued to operate the mill, farm, and store for some years, and one son moved to Cincinnati where he operated a large store.

In 1859 Rhea began construction of his eight-room, two-story house that was completed just prior to the outbreak of the Civil War. Rhea's "mansion" and two others a few miles away built by William Wilson on his 2400-acre upland plantation, "Excelsior," and John Tilley, who lived at the end of the so-called Rhea's Valley, provided solid evidence of the growing prosperity of the area in the late antebellum era. It was an area devastated by the Civil War: Rhea's mill was commandeered by the Union Forces in 1862, and William Wilson's yet unfinished "mansion" was occupied by Union troops and later used as one of their so-called "post colonies." Rhea joined the Confederate army, and Wilson, who lost two sons during the war, was forced to become a refugee

for a time. Both men rebuilt their lives and recouped much of their fortunes in the decade following the end of the war in 1865.

By the time of Rhea's death in 1884 the village bearing his name had survived the suffering and losses it had endured during the war and was again thriving. Its one-room school was reopened and replaced a few years later with a larger facility. The village had two churches, Cumberland Presbyterian and Methodist, several stores and other businesses in addition to Rhea's establishment. By 1900 it possessed two physicians and a locally owned telephone company. As was the case of other villages and settlements in western Washington County after the Civil War, Rhea's Mill thrived for a time then went into a state of decline. The story of Rhea's Mill resembles that of other villages by-passed by both the railroads and major highways. It lost its school to Prairie Grove in 1946, its post office in 1963, and its last business establishment, a blacksmith shop, in 1979.

While William Wilson and his neighbors no doubt patronized Rhea's mill and store, they were more closely identified with another village, Viney Grove, located a few miles north of present-day Prairie Grove. In 1830 James Crawford migrated from Tennessee and settled on a site near Viney Grove. He produced a family of five sons and four daughters. These children with their spouses and others settlers including the Carnahans and Zellners, who arrived in the 1830s and 1840s, formed the nucleus of the Viney Grove community. The Methodist Church, first housed in a log structure built in 1853, was the heart of the small community. Over the years the church moved into other buildings, the latest of which was completed in 1904 and still stands as about the only reminder of a once vibrant village. Situated in a valley, or more correctly on a prairie, surrounded in the distance by mountains, Viney Grove served as center of a highly productive agricultural region devoted to grain, livestock, and fruit. The outbreak of the Civil War interrupted the growth of the

settlement, because it lay in the path of competing armies. Gradually, as the scars of war receded after 1865, Viney Grove once again became a small, but thriving agricultural and commercial center that did a brisk business in livestock, grain strawberries, and various fruits such as apples, peaches, and pears. In the later decades of the nineteenth century it had two factories: one produced shoes and the other brooms. It also possessed several merchandise establishments, one of which included a drugstore. As with other villages in the area whose economy rested on an agricultural base, Viney Grove's primary concern focused on transportation facilities for getting farm products to market. Its residents became railroad enthusiasts and labored long and hard but ultimately unsuccessfully to secure a rail line through their village.

Community-wide efforts on behalf of one project or another existed in many villages and settlements in western Washington County, and Viney Grove was no exception. Nor were such efforts limited to a campaign for a railroad. Nowhere was the pooling of resources more apparent than in Viney Grove's successful campaign in 1874 to build a multi-purpose structure to serve as a place of worship, school, and community center in which temperance, Masonic, and other organizations could hold meetings. In fact, the combination of a church, Masonic lodge, and school housed in a single building that usually belonged to the church was fairly common throughout western Washington County. Such collective efforts, according to one authority, not only provided a place for the people of a village to come together on a regular basis, but more significantly, perhaps such efforts reflected the close-knit character of life on the frontier. In Viney Grove, as elsewhere, the sense of community was strong and has remained strong, even though there are few tangible evidences of a once-thriving community other than the Methodist Church.

About as far westward as one can get in Washington County without crossing into present-day Oklahoma is the town of Evansville, another early settlement that was established about the same time or a little earlier even than Cane Hill. The large Latta family from Tennessee established a settlement in the vicinity and built a house that in 1957 was removed to the Prairie Grove Battlefield. The Lattas planned a self-sufficient community, known as "the Lord's Vineyard" or as Vineyard, that would be insulated from "the outside world." At approximately the same time that the Latta enterprise was established, there was another settlement nearby established by Lewis Evans, who opened a store there in 1830 and shortly afterward built a mill, which for a time furnished many residents in the area with cornmeal. Evans served as sheriff of Washington County from 1828 until 1836. The post office that had been opened in Vineyard in 1829 was transferred in 1837 to Evans's settlement and given the name of Evansville.

In 1838 a flood of merchants descended on Evansville, bringing with them large stocks of goods to sell to the immigrant Cherokees who were due sizable sums of money from the federal government. When the payment of this money was delayed for fifteen years, many of these merchants failed, and the village's business interests were seriously "impaired." Less than fifty years later, in the 1880s, Evansville appears to have thriving once again. In addition to general stores, it had two steam sawmills, a wagon factory, and several gristmills with cotton gins attached, indicating that the area had sufficient timber, grain, and cotton to warrant such enterprises. There is little evidence, however, that education was a priority for early Evansville residents. The record indicates that it had a grade school for a few years in the 1870s, but it ceased to exist in 1878. Despite the fact that Lewis Evans was once sheriff of Washington County, the town that bore his name often appeared oriented more to the Indian Territory (and later Oklahoma) than to Arkansas.

If the inhabitants of western Washington County and indeed Northwest Arkansas were perceived by easterners and even planters in the Arkansas Delta as living in a remote land, they were certainly a restless people, constantly on the move. They moved from one community on the Arkansas frontier to another, created new communities in western Washington County, or moved farther westward. Nor were they untouched by events and movements that affected all Americans. Scarcely had they put down roots on the Arkansas frontier than the nation experienced the Panic of 1837 and the severe depression that followed it, occurrences that had an impact felt throughout the country, including Arkansas. Nor were the residents of Washington County oblivious to the Mexican War (1846–1848). In fact, a company of young volunteers from throughout the county was enrolled in Fayetteville in 1847. Certainly, people in all parts of Washington County were captivated by notions of great wealth to be acquired quickly during the gold rush in California and were counted among the so-called Forty-Niners headed west. Captain Lewis Evans for whom Evansville was named headed up a group of eighty-seven men bound for California in 1849. The following year two such groups left Boonsboro/Cane Hill for California.

Even though Arkansas in general and Washington County in particular exhibited a frontier quality when the Civil War broke out in 1861, much had changed in the western part of the county since the first settlers arrived there about a generation earlier. It was still a rural, sparsely populated area whose economy rested on agriculture, but its economy had moved beyond the subsistence level and was able to support doctors, lawyers, teachers, and other specialists. In 1852 the county even provided for a "poor farm" to house the "weak and feeble-minded." According to the census of 1850, Washington County ranked first among Arkansas counties in the overall value of livestock (horses, mules, milk cows, working oxen, other cattle, and swine.) The western townships

contributed significantly to this ranking. Of central importance to the country's economy was its production of grain (wheat, corn, rye, and oats). Of less importance was the production of butter, potatoes, wool, tobacco, beeswax and honey, and hay. By 1850 the value of fruit crops, especially apples, had become worthy of notice and would become increasingly important in the economy in the future. Agricultural productivity and prosperity as well as population increased during the decade before the Civil War. The census of 1860 demonstrated that the county's total population had increased to 14,673 as compared with 9,970 ten years earlier. In the same period wheat production increased four-fold; 1,000 additional acres came under production; cattle became increasingly important; and tobacco production doubled. By the outbreak of the Civil War the county had thirteen flour and gristmills, twenty-five blacksmith shops and at least six wagon and carriage factories—many of which were located in the western portion of the county— as were an increasing number of commodious private residences that stood in sharp contrast to the small, often log, houses that dominated earlier.

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While the prosperity of Washington County was increasing in the 1850s, the sectional dispute between the North and South over slavery, especially over the expansion of slavery into the territories, was growing in intensity. The sectional conflict ultimately snapped the "cords of union" that led to a long and bloody war in which the seceded Southern states that formed the Confederate States of America battled the United States of America for supremacy. Western Washington County may still have been remote, but it did not escape the horrors of the Civil War. Complicating the situation was the fact that residents of the county were so divided in their loyalties that some families were

torn apart and brother was pitted against brother. The Union and Confederate armies invaded western Washington County; they commandeered supplies, mills, and even homes and disrupted civilian life. All the while, the so-called Pin Indians preyed upon residents along the border of Arkansas and Indian Territory and bands of bushwhackers, jayhawkers, and assorted other irregulars waged "the real war" against residents in various parts of western Washington County, contributing to their suffering and to the general chaos that abounded in the area.

Following the Confederate defeat in the Battle of Pea Ridge in March 1862, clashes between the opposing armies occurred in western Washington County. A day-long battle took place in Cane Hill on November 28, 1862, followed by fighting around the Morrow community on December 5, 1862. The major battle between the Union and Confederate armies occurred on December 7, 1862, in what is known as the Battle of Prairie Grove, a mean and gory fight involving over twenty thousand troops and causing the loss of twenty-five hundred lives. Going into battle the two armies were about equal, but the Confederate Army soon disintegrated because of illness and desertion. It retreated toward Little Rock, leaving behind four thousand sick and wounded soldiers. The grisly Battle of Prairie Grove marked the end of the campaign for Northwest Arkansas. Neither the Union nor the Confederacy was willing to spend the resources necessary to exert permanent control over the region. Thereafter, the war, especially in western Washington County, degenerated into a vicious guerrilla fight involving bands of irregulars who gave quarter neither to soldiers nor civilians. In the wake of the Battle of Prairie Grove, human deprivation and property destruction was everywhere evident. Homes and businesses were destroyed or looted, churches were turned into hospitals and filled with ill and wounded soldiers, and families were left homeless and in dire poverty.

Following the defeat of the Confederacy in 1865, the South, including Arkansas, underwent a period of Reconstruction that deviated substantially from the lenient post-war plan envisioned by President Abraham Lincoln. Even before the mid-1870s when Reconstruction for all practical purposes came to an end, Southerners, defeated but not repentant, had begun the daunting task of rebuilding their lives. The task was all the more daunting because the defeated South was cash poor and remained so for many years.

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The town that evolved near the site of the Battle of Prairie Grove and known as Prairie Grove provides an example of the resilience and resourcefulness of residents in western Washington County in coping with the ravages caused by the nation's bloodiest war. Precisely when the village was first known as Prairie Grove is difficult to ascertain. It may have been, as one writer has suggested, that General Thomas C. Hindman, the Confederate commander during the battle, was the first to give the settlement the name Prairie Grove. When it acquired a post office in 1840 it was known as Sweet Home. Six years later the post office was discontinued, but in 1857 another post office known as Ada was established at the settlement. It retained this name until 1867, when another post office was opened with the name Prairie Grove.

Despite various changes in its name, a settlement had existed on the site that is now Prairie Grove at least since about 1829–1830. At that time Rev. Andrew Buchanan was scouting out the area east of his home in Cane Hill when he came upon a large spring located in a grove of trees. Impressed by the fertile land and especially the spring with its "fountain of clear, cold water," Buchanan desired to settle there but already camped on the site

was a hunter by the name of Tom Wagnon who claimed the land around the spring. After successfully negotiating a deal with Wagnon, Buchanan acquired title to the land and spring. Relatives and friends from the Cane Hill area followed him there, and within a short time Buchanan established a Cumberland Presbyterian church and school not far from the spring. A small settlement grew up around the church and school. No such town with the name Prairie Grove existed at the time of the battle in 1862; in fact, the post office at that time was Ada and was located virtually adjacent to the battle site. By the time of his death in 1857, Buchanan had acquired a sizable fortune that was bequeathed to his wife for her lifetime. Five years after his death, his settlement near the spring in the grove of trees was devastated by the Battle of Prairie Grove, and the church that he established almost three decades earlier served as the principal hospital for soldiers wounded in the battle.

After the Civil War, Buchanan's stepson, James P. Neal, who had come into possession of Buchanan's real estate, was largely responsible for realizing his stepfather's dream of a town around his much beloved spring. Neal, who is often referred to as "the founder of Prairie Grove," studied law in the office of a Fayetteville attorney, served in the Mexican War, and returned to Fayetteville after the war to practice law. Active in local politics, he was elected to the Fayetteville Town Council in 1852 and was chosen "chief alderman or mayor." He married Adeline Bean, the daughter of Mark Bean, a well-to-do Cane Hill entrepreneur. The couple was living in Texas when the Civil War began, and during the war Neal "was actively engaged in furnishing the Confederates with supplies." Shortly after the end of the war he returned to the village founded by his stepfather and set about establishing a full-fledged town. He opened a store, gave land for a Methodist Church, and secured a flour mill by donating four acres of land for its location. According to one local historian, a

plat was made and the name Prairie Grove "was a natural as the town was set in a valley and trees around the spring formed a shady grove." In 1877 the town was "regularly laid out," and the first lots were sold in March of that year. Eleven years later the town with a population of about five hundred people was incorporated.

Even before the town "was regularly laid out," enterprising merchants and entrepreneurs had joined Neal in his efforts to build a town. Among those who established businesses in the settlement was J. J. Baggett, a native of Georgia, who first rode into the Prairie Grove Valley on horseback in 1870. Two years later he established a wood and blacksmith shop in partnership with W. D. Rogers. Baggett was the "wood workman" and Rogers the blacksmith. "We leased a lot from J.[ames] P. Neal, where the town of Prairie Grove is now to put up a shop," Baggett later recalled, "and paid the sum of $1.00 per month for water from the spring." For the next half century Baggett, who married into the locally prominent Mock family, was identified with a wide variety of business, civic, religious, and educational enterprises and was a key figure in the development of Prairie Grove. Reflecting upon his long career toward the end of his life, he wrote: "I have operated nine dry goods stores, five hardware stores, three furniture stores, five retail grocery stores, four wholesale grocery stores, six lumber yards, two flour mills, and have owned 50,000 acres of land." His list omitted references to his extensive involvement in banking, including the first bank in Prairie Grove and the original Bank of Fayetteville opened in 1888; his venture into "the tombstone business;" or his investment in 25,000 acres of land in West Texas. Paralleling the contributions of Baggett and his descendants were those made by the Mocks, McCormicks, Marrs, Zellners, Edmistons, Bartholomews, Parks, and various other old families. Virtually every step in the development of Prairie Grove from a small, relatively insignificant settlement into

a town of wealth and influence in Washington County bore the imprint of these families.

By 1890 the town possessed five general stores as well as furniture, drug, and jewelry stores, a harness shop, marble works, lumber yard, mill, and canning and evaporating plants. Within a decade it acquired the services of four resident physicians, one lawyer, and a hotel. A steady increase in the number of handsome private residences attested to the growing prosperity of the town. From the beginning the residents of Prairie Grove manifested a keen interest in education and religion, a tradition begun by the Reverend Mr. Buchanan, who established a church and school there.

In 1870–1871 Prairie Grove played an active role in the campaign to locate the state university in Washington County—preferably in Prairie Grove. When the county secured the location of the state university within its boundaries by promising the sum of $100,000, residents of the Prairie Grove Valley immediately organized to have the institution located in their midst. Spearheaded by James P. Neal, who at the time was in the midst of creating the town of Prairie Grove, a gathering of the Valley's most prominent citizens and property owners met on September 2, 1871, to formulate a strategy to outbid Fayetteville in the quest for the specific location of the university in the county. William Wilson, the owner of Excelsior plantation near Viney Grove, served as chairman. The gathering agreed to attempt to convince the commissioners charged with recommending the appropriate site in the county for university's location that the Prairie Grove Valley was the ideal place for it. Neal told the group that they could "not complain about a bad location if we sit here idle and do nothing." He eloquently described the advantages of the Valley and urged those present to demonstrate their commitment to having the university built in the Valley by coming forward with donations of money and land. A condensed

version of Neal's lengthy oration on the advantages of a Valley site appeared in the first resolution passed by the gathering. It read:

> we invite an examination of the Prairie Grove Valley by the Commissioners and recommend the location of the university in the said Valley for the following reasons: Because of its healthiness; the fertility of the soil; its adaptation to the use of labor saving machinery; the interest taken in agriculture and education; its fine water and climate; its production of all the cereals and grasses and of all the fruits and vegetables of the temperate zone; the moral status of its citizens. Because of its accessibility and for the important fact that nature has marked it as the highway of travel and railroad from the North to the South; and last for the very important consideration that . . . the people who imposed a tax on themselves to secure its location . . . are in justice entitled equally to its advantages.

Another resolution issued a cordial invitation to the Commissioners to inspect the Prairie Grove Valley after they had arrived at Fayetteville and "after they shall have been wined, dined and toasted, and bored generally on the subject of the fertilization of insipid soils." The resolution urged the Commissioners to take advantage of the hospitality of Valley residents and inspect the area's "fine farms," "excellent springs of pure water," healthy population, and "several desirable sights for the location of the university."

The final action of the meeting was the promise of donations of lands and money to entice the commissioners to look with favor on a site in the Prairie Grove Valley. Among the generous contributions promised were those made by Chairman William Wilson and William H. Rhea of Rhea's Mill. Wilson promised 200 acres of prime valley land and 160 acres of "fine timber on

the mountains"; Rhea offered 1000 acres of land if the university were located at "Viney [Grove] or Sulphur" and 500 acres if located at Prairie Grove. Numerous others stepped forward to make commitments of either land or money or both. In fact, most substantial property owners in the area agreed to contribute to the cause. Though unified in the effort to get the university located in the Prairie Grove Valley, there was considerable rivalry between different communities as to the specific site, as was evident by the conditions attached to most of the promises of donations. Prairie Grove and Viney Grove appear to have been the most popular choices. Despite the rivalry, Neal predicted that $30,000 in money and land could be easily raised in the Valley to secure the university. "We surpass all our competitors in the fitness of location; in point of money we are able to compete with any, if we will."

Although the Prairie Grove Valley lost to Fayetteville in its bid for the university, defeat in no way dampened the enthusiasm of the residents of the town of Prairie Grove for education. The Cumberland Presbyterian school established by the Reverend Mr. Buchanan in connection with his church was replaced with a new structure on the same site. It was dedicated in 1890. The Presbyterian school from its beginnings was limited to the elementary grades. Seven years prior to the dedication of the new structure, Prairie Grove Methodists established the Prairie Grove Institute (also known as the Methodist Academy). The Institute, housed in a handsome two-story brick building located in a grove of stately trees, provided instruction through the high school grades. Its board of trustees included J. J. Baggett, John E. Mock, Dr. E. G. McCormick and others who were enthusiastic promoters of the town. The *Annual Catalogue of the Prairie Grove Institute* for 1890–1891 specifically stated that the school was "not sectarian in any offensive way" but was "distinctly Christian." The reference to its non-sectarian character may well have been

an oblique reference to what was considered the more sectarian approach of the Presbyterian school. The catalogue also described Prairie Grove a " small town twelve miles southwest of Fayetteville" that was easily accessible and had "no saloon or place of dissipation." It was a moral, intelligent, and religious community that was far more preferable for an educational institution because it was "free from the excitements and distractions of larger towns." The *Catalogue* may have been suggesting that the environment of Prairie Grove stood in sharp contrast to that surrounding the state university in the "larger town" of Fayetteville.

The Prairie Grove Institute operated as a private tuition school until it was turned over to the Prairie Grove School District in 1901, the year in which the town acquired its first public school. The Institute building and an additional frame structure housed the town's public school until 1911, when they were replaced by a grade and high school building of three stories, constructed at a cost of $15,000. This structure and an additional elementary school accommodated Prairie Grove's school population until 1954. The increasing use of school buses, coupled with the decline in enrollment in smaller schools in the surrounding area, accelerated a school consolidation movement. In time, the schools of Viney Grove and Rhea's Mill, among others, were absorbed by the Prairie Grove School District. School construction in the town increased as the consolidation movement gained momentum. Presiding over this public school expansion in the last half of the twentieth century was a succession of school boards whose members included those by the name of Baggett, Wilson, Parks, Bartholomew, Carnahan, and representatives of other families long identified with civic and educational enterprises in Prairie Grove.

Increasingly the town became the trade and commercial center of a large portion of western Washington County, an area

still noted for its agriculture. James P. Neal may have spoken a bit extravagantly in 1871 about some aspects of the Prairie Grove Valley in pressing its claims as the site for the location of the state university, but he did not overstate his case in describing the Valley's suitability for "the production of all the cereals and grasses and all the fruits and vegetables of the temperate zones." Historically the production of wheat, corn and oats had been agricultural staples. Corn and oat production in Washington County peaked in 1910 with 990,210 bushels and 477,237 bushels, respectively; both declined thereafter. Wheat production crested in 1920 with 475,350 bushels and also declined thereafter. Grain production resulted in the establishment of more modern mills, such the Prairie Grove Steam Mill established in 1876 by J. J. Baggett and two partners. For a variety of reasons such enterprises did not always prosper. Baggett later recalled that in his mill venture he lost "$1000.00 more than I was worth —I lost everything." As was the experience of other adventurous entrepreneurs in an era of a rapidly changing, unregulated, and free-wheeling economy, Baggett soon recovered his losses and once again prospered by shifting the focus of his investments.

In view of the fact that many residents of Prairie Grove and the Valley had roots in Tennessee and Kentucky, it is perhaps not surprising that fine horse-breeding operations flourished. In fact, the Valley became known as "the second blue grass country." One of the best-known horse breeders in the area was John E. Rogers, whose stable was located about a mile from Prairie Grove. Specializing in trotters and pacers, Rogers built a track between Prairie Grove and Viney Grove. As a fancier of fine horses, Dr. William Mock, a physician and member of an old Prairie Grove family, had few equals, and his stables housed a succession of famous mounts. Horses, mules, and livestock in general constituted an important part of Prairie Grove's economy in the

late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. It had numerous saddle and harness shops and several livestock markets.

The production of apples, strawberries, and tomatoes in the vicinity of Prairie Grove assumed increasing importance in the town's economy. Apple production in Washington County had been and remained significant but reached its peak in1920 with almost two million bushels per year. Strawberry and tomato production peaked about 1930. Obvious adjustments had to be made as the area began to move away from non-perishable crops to more perishable ones such a fruits and vegetables. As a result canneries and evaporating plants proliferated in western Washington County with Prairie Grove as an important center for processing fruits and vegetables. By World War I the town had the Prairie Grove Preserving Company, locally known as the "vinegar plant." For a time these processing plants became the largest employers in the town.

For such enterprises to thrive and grow required an adequate transportation system in western Washington County. The late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries were characterized by an orgy of railroad building throughout the nation. Towns and villages dreamed of rail lines connecting them with the outside world and more particularly with outside markets for their agricultural products. Washington County was no exception. Almost every village and hamlet of any consequence in the western part of the county aspired to be on a rail line and campaigned to realize this aspiration. Their agitation, as well as the competition among towns, intensified when the St. Louis and San Francisco Railway Company (Frisco) announced plans to build a line from Missouri through Fort Smith, Arkansas, into Texas. The Frisco surveyed two possible routes through Washington County—one through Fayetteville and the other through the Prairie Grove Valley. Residents of Prairie Grove, Viney Grove, Cincinnati, and other towns and villages had high

hopes that the company would choose the Valley route. Much to their disappointment the Frisco chose the route through Fayetteville, largely because that town had outbid those to the west by raising $8,000 for the promotion of the road and another $2,500 for the construction of a depot. The first train arrived in Fayetteville on June 8, 1881, and the first passenger train made its appearance a year later to the cheers of a crowd that included half of the total population of Washington County. The completion of the line southward through the Boston Mountains made much slower progress; by any standard the completion of this section of the railroad was a remarkable engineering feat that included the building of towering bridges and the Winslow Tunnel.

Residents of Prairie Grove, while disappointed that the Frisco had by-passed them, nonetheless continued their drive for a rail link to the outside world. Taking the lead in this campaign were James E. Mock, J. J. Baggett, C. G. Marrs, and other prominent citizens of the town of Prairie Grove, who staged a rally in behalf of the cause in September 1888. The town's chief competition for an east-west rail line from Fayetteville through the Valley into Indian Territory was Viney Grove. Whether the proposed line would pass through Prairie Grove or Viney Grove was sufficiently uncertain, according to one story, that when the editor of the *Prairie Grove Banner,* one of several weekly newspapers published in the town in the late nineteenth century purchased new printing equipment for his paper, he had it shipped to Viney Grove (presumably by wagon) and stored there until the route of the railroad was decided. The editor obviously thought that there was a strong possibility that the line would pass through Viney Grove rather than Prairie Grove. If this story is true, the editor apparently also thought that a railroad through one or the other of the two places would take place in a short time. He was wrong on both counts. (To be continued.)

THE STOKENBURY GARAGE, ELKINS 1938–1946

LORNA STOKENBURY PRYOR

From about 1929 to 1972 Stokenbury Garage was located in the southeast outside corner of the crossroads that was the hub of the business district of Elkins, Arkansas. The building's exterior was brick, the back half of ordinary red brick and the front half of variegated tans and soft golds. This mix was named sunset blend, as I heard my mother tell many people over the years.

The building was a large rectangle divided into two rooms of approximately the same size. The front room was devoted to metal shelving filled with automotive parts, and there were also counters holding small hardware items—friction tape, flashlights, light bulbs—cigarettes, and an array of candies, chewing gum, soft drinks, all appropriately showcased or refrigerated.

The back room was the site of the repair work which my Dad did for his customers' cars. It always offered the smells of gasoline, brake fluid, motor oil, and cook-on tire patching materials, the latter suggesting the odor of gunpowder, or cap pistols in action.

When I was between the ages of five and thirteen, I saw an ever-changing parade of people and vehicles coming into the garage, which made such lasting impressions that they burn brightly to this day.

Harold Hudgens was an occasional customer of my Dad's. Mr. Hudgens lived up at Sulphur City and made it by our place maybe once a month. To hear him talk was an experience. He punctuated his speeches with frequent "hells" and "damns," and he was also guilty of blasphemy. He did all of this so absentmindedly that I don't think that he was conscious of it. (Today a person may preface practically

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Lorna Stokenbury Pryor, who lives in Fort Smith with her husband, Thomas B. Pryor, is writing down some of her fond recollections of Elkins, Arkansas, and her family's garage during some of the 1930s and 1940s.

every statement with "You know," or "Basically," without hearing herself/himself working the phrase into monotony for a listener).

I don't remember my parents ever mentioning Harold Hudgens's swearing (we would have called it cussin') or making an example of him in order to instruct me on how not to talk. But I knew that my parents did not talk that way, and so their example was what set the tone for me.

When Harold Hudgens was in the garage one day for some bit of car business, he came into the front room to pay what he owed. My Dad rang up the owed amount on the cash register, and Mr. Hudgens had some change coming. There were bills and there were coins. The transaction completed, Mr. Hudgens left, and I continued my daily sweep-out, across the room.

Minutes after the sound of Mr. Hudgens's Plymouth faded away, I was over by the counter near the cash register. There were two quarters, close to the place where Mr. Hudgens had been given his change. I pondered a bit, cogitated on the subject, and then decided what to do: I tore a blank check from the Bank of Elkins pad of counter checks, carefully placed the quarters on the blank check, and proceeded to fold the check around the two quarters, very neatly. I located a small rubber band and secured the entire effort. I then placed the little package on the handy marble shelf that the cash register provided, just above the partitioned cash drawer. I even considered writing Mr. Hudgens's name on the parcel, but was not absolutely sure that the quarters were his. So I left the name off and went back into the shop, where my Daddy was head and shoulders into the open front of a car, with the hood propped up securely.

I told him of my find and my wrapping and placing of the quarters. I said that I figured that the change belonged to Harold Hudgens.

"Probably," he said. I waited for some further feedback, and when there was none given, I finally asked, "Well?"

Still deep in the cavity of the car's engine, he answered, "Well, what?"

I summoned up what patience I could and said, "Don't you think that it was awfully honest and good of me to take care of this

Though no longer a garage, the building described in this article is still standing. The wizardry of modern technology placed the 1934 automobile in this recent photograph (Courtesy Tom and Lorna Pryor).

money and to tell you about it?

He slowly emerged from the yawn of the engine, wiped his hands on a grease rag, looked at me with his blue eyes snapping, and answered, "Well, I certainly am not going to brag on you for just doing something that you ought to have done!"

PALATINE: THE STUFFLEBEAM MIGRATION TO NORTHWEST ARKANSAS

DWAIN SKELTON

Editor's note: The following is the result of research by Dwain Skelton into the family history of his paternal grandmother, Perlina Jane Stufflebeam Skelton. The first Stufflebeam came to America from the Palatinate in 1709.[1] The authors have traced his descendants to Perlina's father, William Asbury Stufflebeam, who was born in Kentucky in 1836 and died in Fayetteville, Arkansas, in 1863.

Dwain H. Skelton was born on January 12,1937, at the family farm near Black Oak, Reed Township, Washington County, Arkansas, the seventh of seven sons and the twelfth of twelve children. His father was Henry Eli Skelton. Eli was born on July 21, 1887, at Hazel Valley, Reed Township. He died, at age 98, on January 2, 1986, at Fayetteville and was buried at the Black Oak Cemetery just a couple of miles from the family farmstead.[2]

Eli's mother was Perlina Jane (Stufflebeam) Skelton. She was born on January 26,1863, in Madison County, Arkansas, and died in Washington County on April 10, 1945.[3] On April 18, 1880, she married Jonathan Robert Skelton in Reed Township.

Dwain and Betty Anderson Skelton have been traveling companions since high school days in Springdale, Arkansas, nearly fifty years ago. Since Dwain retired ten years ago, they have traveled more than 250 thousand miles through 49 states documenting their ancestors. Other Northwest Arkansas families still being documented are: Phipps, Richardson, Thurman, Patrick, and Winkles.

Perlina's father was William Asbury Stufflebeam.[4] He was born in 1836 on Grape Creek in what is now Magoffin County, Kentucky, and died February 22,1863, at Fayetteville. On August 26,1860, William married Rebecca Reed of Washington County. Jehu S. Murrin performed the ceremony. To that union was born only one child, Perlina Jane, but she had several half-brothers and half-sisters. For more detailed information on the rich history surrounding Rebecca Reed, the reader is referred to "The Legend of Granny Fraley," published in the February 1996 issue of *Flashback*.

William Asbury Stufflebeam served and died in the Civil War. On January 7, 1863, he enlisted, at Fayetteville into "I" Company, 1st Arkansas Cavalry Regiment, Union Army. He died of "inflammation of the lungs" twenty-seven days after his daughter, Perlina Jane, was born.[5] Very possibly he never saw his baby girl. The location of his grave remains uncertain to this day but may be in either the Patrick Cemetery near Combs or the Brannon Mountain Cemetery in Madison County.

William's father was Richard H. Stufflebeam.[6] He was born ca. 1810 in Estill County, Kentucky. His wife, Mary "Polly" Patrick, the daughter of Hugh and Barbara (Bailey) Patrick, was born in 1814, also in Kentucky. They were married in Estill County on July 14, 1830.[7] To that union were born: William Asbury, 1836; James Anderson, 1837; Jacob G., 1839; John Merida, 1844; Houston P., 1847; Pa(e)rlina A., 1850; and Hiram E., ca. 1852. All those children were born in Kentucky. The Richard H. Stufflebeam family migrated to Madison County, Arkansas, sometime between 1852 and 1853.[8] On July 2, 1860, they were enumerated in the census.[9] In the 1840 Kentucky census for Estill County we find Richard Stufflebeen, between twenty and thirty years of age, with a wife between twenty and thirty years of age, with three male children under five. These ages are consistent with the 1860 Valley Township, Madison County,

census. Richard and Mary "Polly" (Patrick) Stufflebeam are believed to be buried in the Brannon Mountain Cemetery in Madison County.

Richard's father was John Stufflebean, who filed for a Revolutionary War Pension in Estill County, on August 30, 1832.[10] When he filed for his pension, he said he was eighty years old. His application indicates he was born south of Albany, New York, on the east side of the Hudson River and later lived in the Minisink Valley near the Pennsylvania and New Jersey borders. When John was a teenager, his family lived near the Neversink River, eight to ten miles short of where it empties into the Delaware River. That residence is supported by church records. John's younger sister, Gusje (Creshe), married Peter Dingerman there on November 13, 1786. On June 2, 1787, a daughter, Eva, was born to Peter Dingman and Creshe Stofflebeen.[11]

Both Johannes Stufflebane and Joha. Stufflebane, Jr., were enrolled in the 1st. Regiment of Saugerties-Mamakating, Ulster County, New York Militia. While living in the Minisink Valley, in 1775–76, John enlisted in Captain Jacob Dewitt's New York Company of Rangers.[12]

Joseph Brant (1742–1807) was a Mohawk war chief and leader of the Iroquois Loyalists. He grew up in the Mohawk Valley of New York. One of his last raids was against Minisink in 1779.[13] John says it was Brant who captured him, took him to Fort Niagara, made him "run the gauntlet," and later "sold him to Butler's Regiment of Rangers" (British) who transferred him to Fort Detroit. John Stufflebeam was with Butler's Rangers for some months until he and five others were able to escape and make their way toward Kentucky.

John describes their journey to Kentucky as being about one hundred miles over water, a walk through the "wilderness" until they found the Muskingum River, down that river to the Ohio

River where they "fell in" with James Garrard and company destined for Kentucky.

James Garrard (January 14,1749–January 19, 1822), governor and minister, was born in Stafford County, Virginia. In 1769 he married Elizabeth Mountjoy and they had twelve children. As a militia captain Garrard commanded a schooner that was captured by the British in 1776. He also managed to escape. He and John Stuphelbun probably had a lot to talk about as they journeyed on.[14] Ultimately their group would settle around the headwaters of the Kentucky River, and Garrard would go on to become Kentucky's second governor in 1796.

Originally under the jurisdiction of Virginia, in 1776 Kentucky County was formed from part of Fincastle County and in 1780 was divided into areas of Fayette, Lincoln, and Jefferson. In 1792 Kentucky became a state. When John escaped from his captors, he made his way to the area of Fayette in the District of Kentucky. In 1785 he had his name included in a petition to the Legislative Body of Virginia asking that Fayette be subdivided for the convenience of its inhabitants. As a result of that effort, Bourbon County was organized on October 17, 1785.

In 1788 an effort was underway to divide Bourbon County. John allowed his name to be included among those inhabitants petitioning for such a division. In 1789 he again allowed his name to be added to a petition, this time objecting to the proposed division of Bourbon County. That 1789 petition fell on "deaf ears," and Estill County was the new designation for the place where John had taken up residence. In a matter of less than a dozen years, without physically moving, he had been a resident of two states and three counties.

In Bourbon County, Kentucky, on June 25,1790, John Stufflebean married Priscilla Ross, daughter of John Ross.[15] Possibly two sons, William John, b. ca. 1794, and Michael, b. ca. 1795, were born to that union.

On August 12, 1795, in Paris, Bourbon County, Kentucky, John Stufflebean was bonded to marry Alice Ketchum.[16] To that union ten children were born. Sons are: Andrew, James, and Samuel, all born 1795–1800; Jacob, b. ca. 1801; Hyram, b. 1800–1810; John, b. ca. 1808; and Richard, b. ca. 1810. All those boys were born in Kentucky.

On July 25, 1816, John Stofelbeen entered into a twenty-year lease agreement with Thomas Duckam for a two-hundred-acre plantation/farm at the location where the North Fork, Middle Fork, and South Fork flow together to begin the Kentucky River's flow toward the Ohio River. The lease involved no money. Instead, Stofelbeen was to give Duckam two barrels of corn annually, beginning in the January following, for each acre of land under cultivation and fenced. Additionally, Stofelbeen was to, at Duckam's expense, plant, fence, and protect an apple orchard containing 150 trees within two years following entering into the lease. Any additional land Stofelbeen cleared for cultivation was to be rent free for four years after it was fenced and put under cultivation. John was possibly sixty years old when he entered into the lease, but he had a large family to help work the plantation.

From Estill County, Kentucky, court records, dated October 2, 1819, we find that Moses M. Price, assignee of John Bennett, sued John S. Been, alias John Stufflebeen, over a note for $85.50. Laurence Ross placed the bond. Could Laurence Ross have been related to John's first wife, Priscilla?

In 1820 John Stufflebean lived in Ravenna Township of Estill County, Kentucky.[17] Ravenna is about twenty miles east southeast of Richmond on the Kentucky River. He was also found on page 248 of the 1830 census for Estill County, Kentucky. John Stufflebean, listed as a Revolutionary War soldier, and a woman, possibly ten years younger than he, were enumerated on page 66 of the 1840 census for Estill County, Kentucky. They were living

with David Snowden and his family. The twenty-year lease on John's plantation had expired leaving him and Elsee with no place to live.

Also, from Estill County, Kentucky, court records, dated May 3, 1825, we find an indenture from Thomas Duckman and Reuben Anderson, of Franklin County, Kentucky, to Joseph Taylor, for $300. One item listed was a tool for digging coal at "The Stufflebean" in Estill County, Kentucky. Was there a coal mine on John's lease?

Jacob Stufflebeam, born 1801, was living in Randolph County, Illinois in 1842, and is mentioned as John's son, and Michael, of Illinois, is mentioned as a brother in both John's pension and Elsee's widow's pension applications.[18] She says they went to Kaskaskia, Randolph County, Illinois, in 1842 to live with Jacob.

Kaskaskia was the earliest capitol of Illinois Territory and was located northwest of where the Kaskaskia River flowed into the Mississippi River. Periodic floods threatened Kaskaskia. It was nearly destroyed in 1844 and in the spring of 1881 the Mississippi River broke through a narrow strip of land north of town, changed course, and flowed into the Kaskaskia River channel thus isolating Kaskaskia Island. Buildings began to slide into the river as it ate away at the town. Over seven thousand early pioneers had lived in Kaskaskia before the floods destroyed it.

In 1892 the State of Illinois appropriated funds to create Garrison Hill Cemetery just north of Fort Gage and relocate the remaining graves from three Kaskaskia Island cemeteries to the bluff across the Mississippi River opposite the old town. Thirty-eight-hundred boxes of remains were removed from Kaskaskia Island. Some boxes contained members of entire families. Since many of the headstones had been washed away, many boxes could not be identified.

The names John Stufflebean and Jacob Stopplebean appear on this plaque honoring the memory of Revolutionary War soldiers buried in Randolph County, Illinois (Photo by author).

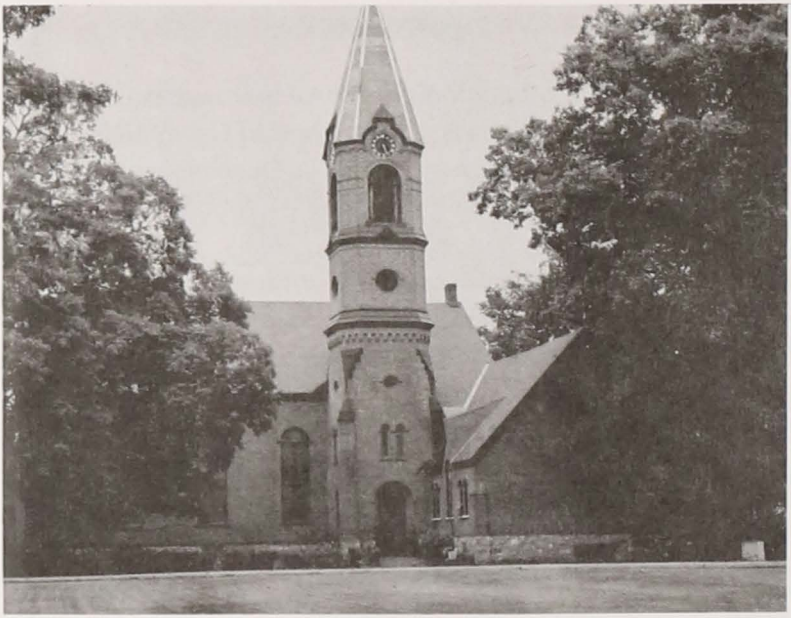
The state has erected a monument overlooking Fort Gage that

reads, "to those who sleep here who were first buried at Kaskaskia and afterwards removed to this cemetery. They were the early pioneers of the Great Mississippi Valley. They planted free institutions in a wilderness and were the founders of a great commonwealth. In memory of their sacrifices, Illinois gratefully erects this monument. 1892." John Stufflebean died on December 16, 1844, and was buried where his son Jacob lived near Kaskaskia.[19] His name is included on a bronze marker on the grounds of the Sparta High School in Randolph County. The marker was placed there in 1934 by the Fort Chartres Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution. Also on that marker is the name Jacob Stopplebean. However, Revolutionary War records in the National Archives indicate only one Jacob Stopplebean, whose wife was named Ann, served in that war and he "was born, lived, and died in the state of New York."[20]

John's wife, Elsee, died in 1846 and his son Jacob died on July 19, 1849.[21] Perhaps they are now buried in one of the unmarked plots at Garrison Hill Cemetery.

John Stufflebean's father was Johannes Stoppelbeen, born December 30, 1732, in Prussia, now present day Germany. He and his brother Jacob landed in Philadelphia on July 26, 1741, from the ship St. Mark. They had departed from Rotterdam and had come by way of Cowes, Isle of Wight.[22] These two young men were separated from their parents when they came from Rotterdam in 1709.

Johannes Stoppelbeen married Eva Dingerman. Their children were: Johannes (John), baptized February 28, 1756; Jacob, baptized August 6, 1758; Gusje, baptized 1761; Michael, baptized October 30, 1763; and B(V)elten, baptized February 9, 1766. Dutch Reformed Church records in Kinderhook, Columbia County, New York, show Eva (Dingerman) Stoppelbeen to be the mother of Johannes Stoppelbeen (John Stufflebean), baptized February 28, 1756.



Kinderhook Reformed Dutch Church, Kinderhook, Columbia County, New York (photo by author).

What follows is based upon earlier research done by others. We are led to believe Johannes Stoppelbeen's father was Johann Jacob Stoppelbein, baptized January 13, 1697, in present-day Germany. He was twice married.

The father of Johann Jacob Stoppelbein was Johann "Hans" Peter Stoppelbein, b. 1667. He was a husbandman and vinedresser and lived at Laubenheim (ten kilometers north of Bad Kreuznach, in modern-day Germany). He also was married twice.

"Hans" Peter Stoppelbein, his first wife, Engel Scherp, and three of their children, Hans Peter, Johann Gabriel, and Johannes were passengers on Captain Powell's vessel in the second sailing of Palatines to America. They sailed on May 23, 1709, from Rotterdam, arriving in England on May 27 and then later sailing on to America. Engel died in November 1709 on board ship. She was buried, probably at sea, on November 5, 1709.

"Hans" Peter Stoppelbein's second marriage was on January 25, 1711, to Dorothea Brass, the daughter of Hans Michael Brass. "Hans" Peter settled his new family in Queensburg, New York, about 1716/17. Queensburg was one of four "refugee camps" located about twenty miles south of Albany, New York, on the east side of the Hudson River, where those proud Rhine River Palatines were forced to live under deplorable conditions.

"Hans" Peter's father was Johann Valentin Stoppelbein, who was buried on December 23, 1688. Church records at Langenlonsheim are reported to show he was baptized on January 12, 1634. He was also known as "Hans" Veltin Stoppelbein. He also was married twice.

Johann Valentin Stoppelbein's father was Johannes Stoppelbein, b. 1610. His wife was named Elizabetha, b. 1605, d. 1666.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

There is only a thin paper trail available for this family prior to the end of the Revolutionary War outside that which was maintained by the Protestant Dutch Reformed Churches. We are deeply indebted to those who contributed so much toward tying this article to European and Colonial American research documented in earlier publications, specifically the ministers/historians of the Protestant Dutch Reformed Churches, the Holland Society of New York, Henry Z. Jones, Jr., Lee N. Stufflebeam, and the many Stufflebean(m) cousins who shared their time and ancestral information.

NOTES

1. Generally speaking, a Palatine was someone who came from the region of Germany called the Palatinate. Prior to 1871 what is now Germany was a number of separate states, such as Wurttemburg, Prussia, and Bavaria. The Palatinate was one of those states and was located along the Rhine River. When they were brought to the Colonies, the Palatines were stripped of their civil rights and did not own land, pay taxes, vote, or hold any public office except those within the churches.
2. Obituary, *Northwest Arkansas Times*, Fayetteville, Arkansas, January 3, 1986.
3. National Archives, Washington DC, Department of the Interior, Bureau of Pensions, Widow's Original Claim 106,603, Widow's Declaration for Army pension; minor of Wm. A. Stufflebeam, Certificate 117,672; U.S. Pension Agency, Knoxville, Tennessee, to Commissioner of Pensions, dated June 2, 1879.
4. Ibid.
5. National Archives, Washington, DC, Widow's Pension Application 106,603; Surgeon General to Department of the Interior, Pension Office, September 29, 1865.
6. U.S. Census, Arkansas, Madison County, Valley Township, Jupiter Post Office, family 307.
7. Estill County, Kentucky; Miscellaneous Marriage Records, page 72, item 2.
8. National Archives, Washington, DC, Widow's Pension Application 106,603;affidavit, James Reed and James T. Thomson, dated June 13, 1868.
9. U.S. Census; Arkansas, Madison County; Valley Township, Jupiter Post Office, family 307.
10. National Archives, Washington, DC, Revolutionary War Pension R-10,283 1/2.
11. Machackmech Dutch Reformed Church, near Port Jervis, Orange County, New York.
12. National Archives, Washington, DC, Revolutionary War Pension R-10,283 1/2.
13. Richard L. Blanco, ed., *The American Revolution, 1775–1783: An Encyclopedia*, vol. 1 (New York: Garland Publishing, 1993); Barbara Graymont, *The Iroquois in the American Revolution* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press,1972).

14. In her application for a widow's pension, Elsee says she, John and all ten of their children were illiterate. Johannes Stopplebeen never learned to read, write, or even sign his own name. Therefore, starting about 1800, you will find his Christian name, Johannes, Americanized to John, and his surname, Stopplebeen, Americanized to Stufflebeam, based on how the writer heard it pronounced.

15.Marriage Records of Bourbon County, Kentucky (1786–1800).

16. Ibid., August 12, 1795.

17.1820 U.S. Census, Kentucky, Estill County, Ravenna Township, 52.

18. National Archives, Washington, DC, Revolutionary War Pension R-10,283 1/2.

19. Ibid.

20. Ibid.; Department of the Interior, Pension Office, to H. C. Simpson, Modoc, Randolph County, Illinois, February 3, 1887.

21. Noncupative will of Jacob Stufflebean, Probate Box 112, page 140, 1851, Randolph County, Illinois.

22. Ralph Beaver Strassburger, *Pennsylvania German Pioneers*, ed. William John Hinke (Camden, ME: Picton Press, 1991), 1:297, 298, 300.

THE LEGEND OF BANJO BILLY

BOB KEEN

This is the story of one of the colorful old guys who lived on Horse Shoe Bend above Fly Creek three miles southeast of Canehill. His real name was Craig Fulkerson, but if you mention his real name no one would know who you were talking about. One thing about old Banjo Billy was that he always carried a .45 strapped to his waist. No one ever knew much about him as he never had much to say about himself. He came here with a circus back in the twenties which set up a show in Fayetteville. He had a booth where he would sit with his banjo; a young couple would come by and state their names, then Banjo would make up a song for them for a fee. My great uncle Abbie was also a part of this circus; his job was taking care of all the horses. One of the show's main attractions was the fighting man, who was six feet, six inches tall and weighed three hundred pounds. The game went this way: anyone who wanted to put up two dollars could climb in the ring with him, and if he could pin the giant he would get twenty-five dollars. This was a trial for all the young boys then. But the catch was that he had never been beaten. It was late in the season and the show was going into winter quarters in Florida after this show. On the last night of the circus the fighting man was strutting around the midway. When he passed old Banjo's booth, he said something that he should have left unsaid. Banjo leaped out of his booth and began his thrashing of the fighting man right in the middle of the midway at a peak time. Consequently the management fired old Banjo. Uncle Abbie didn't want to go to Florida, so he got Banjo and they started across the country for Grandfather Sid Keen's place. While on the way they came by the Walker place. All the Walkers were down with the flu, so Banjo stayed there to take care of them, and Uncle Abbie went on to his brother's place. When Banjo had nursed all the Walkers back to

health, they let him live in a cabin on their place. He made a living making instruments—guitars, fiddles, and banjos. He made a cane for Grandfather, who was blind. Grandfather drew some letters in the sand and told Banjo he wanted them on his cane. When grandfather came back after his cane, he made the remark that it looked like a nice cane. Banjo then asked how he knew how it looked when he couldn't even see. Grandfather's reply was that he could see with his hands better than most people can with their eyes. Banjo then asked what the funny-looking letters said. Grandfather ran his hand down the cane and replied, "This is Latin and it says 'Mercy rules proper.'" My Uncle Rob, who was with grandfather, said it sure seemed funny seeing someone walking around with a .45 on him.

It was about this time that two brothers up on Blue Mountain decided that their mission in life was to terrorize the whole area, and they did a good job of it for some time. But they met their match with old Banjo Billy, as he wasn't afraid of them or anyone else. Once when one of the boys was riding by the cabin at night, he heard old Banjo playing his banjo and singing a song he had written about the other brother. Well he got mad and thought he would let Banjo know who was boss. He pulled his pistol and started firing all over the place, so old Banjo stood in the middle of the gunfire and pulled his own gun and took aim and shot the guy through the hip and shoulder. Away home he rode. The boys then determined that Banjo was to be their target, so the neighbors got together and raised enough money to send Banjo to his sister's house in Washington State. Banjo was not one to lie, and he had promised Ollie Phillips that he would write when he got there, but no letter ever came, so many of the locals still think that the boys finally got old Banjo, as nothing more was ever heard of him.

Back this past May when my cousin Mary Szoyka and friend Russ Kirk came to visit me, we were out running around in the hills. We came to the spring and stopped to get a cool drink.

Clarence Phillips and the Easter boys came along. We had a good visit there in the shade of the trees around the spring. I asked Clarence if he could sing us one of old Banjo`s songs. Here is how it goes:

That old fox he held me up over hang over bluff
And said old banjo now you're mine,
With my hand in my bosom and fox on my back
I thought I was I was about to leave this old world behind,
Well I fought and kicked till he thought he had caught himself a bear,
He didn't know how in the world to get loose,
But one thing is sure he didn't want me there.

Old fox spotted me riding around the hill,
Waiting to jump on me but I spotted him before he jumped me,
When old Banjo shot his six-shooter old fox got up the hill,
He hurried he scurried he got away quick and soon,
I spit in his hat and I would do it again,
As sure as I'm a-singing this tune.

DISTINGUISHED CITIZENS 2002

The Washington County Historical Society chose Charles W. Stewart III and James "Arlie" Pennington as recipients of its Distinguished Citizen Award for 2002. Presentation of the awards was the highlight of the Society's annual meeting on October 6.

Charles Stewart was born on September 25, 1957, in El Dorado, Arkansas, to Charles W. Stewart II and Mettie Adams Stewart. In 1939 the family moved to Fayetteville, where he attended Washington School and graduated from Fayetteville High School in 1945. He immediately joined the Navy. After returning home in 1945 he enrolled in the University of Arkansas, where he graduated from the Law School in 1951. At this time he entered the family business, Ozark Steel Company, where he remains active. In 1955 he was elected to the Arkansas House of Representatives, where he served continuously and well until 1999. At times he opposed the leadership when he thought there was just cause. For instance, when then Governor Clinton vetoed his House Bill705, which provided state tax exemption for the first $6,000 of income of college and university retirees as was given to retirees of state government and public schools, he introduced House Bill1931 the next session and pushed it through both houses for approval. In 1957 he opposed Governor Faubus by voting against Act 10, which required faculty members and administrators of colleges and universities in the state to sign a loyalty oath. Act 10 passed but was later struck down by court action.

Stewart's commitment to service began early; he became an Eagle Scout in 1944. In later years he was a member of the Fayetteville Jaycees, Fayetteville Exchange Club (48 years), was chairman of the Washington County Chapter of the American Red Cross (1959–1960), member of the Board of the Fayetteville Chamber of Commerce, and president of the Washington County

Historical Society (1997–1999). His interest in the Society continues, especially in the area of family history.

In the early 1950s he met Joann Rogers, sister of Marian Orton and a U of A student. They were married in 1955 and have two sons, Charles W. IV and Thomas Rogers "T.R."

James "Arlie" Pennington was born at Drake's Creek in Madison County. His parents were John B. and Myrtle Pennington. After his return from New Guinea and the Philippines, he came to Fayetteville in1948 at the suggestion of a friend who thought Northwest Arkansas would soon have a growing demand for single-family homes. He served as a carpenter's apprentice and studied drafting in preparation for establishing his contracting business. He gained a reputation as one of the most qualified builders in town and the leading architects recommended him to their clients. Today he estimates that he has built seven hundred homes.

Pennington was a charter member of the Northwest Arkansas Home Builders Association and served as president in the 1970s. He was on the Fayetteville Board of Adjustments for eight years in the 1960s. A charter member of Sertoma Club, he served as president and helped establish a speech and hearing clinic in Springdale. He also served a term as president of the Washington County Historical Society and on its building committee to restore the Ridge House. He and his company restored the Ridge House in the 1970s. He is on the Board of the Ozark Christian Academy, where he volunteered his work for remodeling.

He is married to the former Thealda Broyles, and they have two children, James Ronald Pennington and Rowena Marie Morrison.

LOUISIANA PURCHASE LECTURE SERIES

The Washington County Historical Society, in association with the Department of History at the University of Arkansas, is presenting a lecture series to commemorate the 200th anniversary of the Louisiana Purchase. The series will take place during March 2003 as a part of Arkansas Archeology Month and will cover the background of the Louisiana Purchase, the situation of the Native Americans at the time of the Louisiana Purchase, the role of Arkansas Post both before and after the Louisiana Purchase, and the impact of the opening of such a vast new frontier upon an individual such as Archibald Yell.

All lectures will be held at Headquarters House, at 118 East Dickson in Fayetteville. The lectures will take place at 7:00 p.m. on Monday evenings and will be followed by discussion and light refreshments. For further information, please call the Washington County Historical Society at 479-521-2970.

March 3: Dr. David Sloan, Professor of History, University of Arkansas, "Before Lewis and Clark: European Discovery of the North American Interior."

March 10: Dr. George Sabo, Archeologist with the Arkansas Archeological Survey and the University of Arkansas Department of Anthropology, "Indians in Colonial Louisiana."

March 24: Superintendent Laura Soulliere Gates of the Cane River Creole National Historic Park in Natchitoches, Louisiana, "Arkansas Post Before and After the Louisiana Purchase." (Subject to change)

March 31: Mr. William Hughes, Author, "Archibald Yell: Hero of the Nineteenth-Century Frontier."

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